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June 16, 2017

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Broadband-Enabled Health Care Solutions -- GN Docket No. 16-46

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On June 14, 2017, Mr. John Kravitz, Senior Vice President and CIO, Mr. Joseph Fisne, Deputy CIO, and Ms. Mary Honicker, Program Director/Information Technology, of Geisinger Health System, and the undersigned, met with Ms. Karen Onyeije, Mr. Louis Peraertz, Mr. Ben Bartholome, Ms. Katie Gorscak, and Chris Gibbons, M.D. and Yahya Shaikh, M.D. of the FCC's Connect2Health Task Force. Geisinger shared the attached slides during its presentation.

Geisinger discussed the critical importance of access to affordable broadband in rural areas for delivery of effective and specialized health care to an aging population. Geisinger also discussed how its telemedicine programs have actually reduced both healthcare costs and patient travel by dramatically reducing the number of hospital admissions and readmissions, while benefiting local community health providers by encouraging rural patients to obtain care directly from their primary physicians or a local community hospital or clinic. Finally, Geisinger stressed the importance of raising the outdated 20 year old budgetary cap on the Rural Health Care Program, which has not kept pace with overall demand for Rural Health Care Program support, including the recent legislation that includes skilled nursing facilities among eligible health care providers nor with the enhanced bandwidth requirements for modern telemedicine.

Sincerely,

WOMBLE CARLYLE SANDRIDGE & RICE
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Douglas G. Bonner
Partner

Enclosure